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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 06/22/09

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ARTICLES:

(1) How good is the next ambassador to Japan, John Roos? - Interviews with ex-Vice President Walter Mondale, Stanford University Professor Emeritus Daniel Okimoto

NIKKEI (Page 6) (Full)
June 20, 2009

The U.S. government has nominated lawyer John Roos, 54, as the next ambassador to Japan, and his appointment will soon be submitted to the Senate for confirmation. There is high interest in the personality and capability of Roos, who is not well-known in Japan. We interviewed former Vice President Walter Mondale, 81, a former

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ambassador to Japan who hired Roos for his presidential election campaign in 1984, and Daniel Okimoto, 66, professor emeritus at Stanford University, an American political scientist of Japanese descent who advises Roos.

-- What was the decisive factor in the nomination?

Mondale: He is a close friend (of the President). President Obama respects Mr. Roos, and he is happy to send him as envoy to an important ally.

-- He has not had much connection with Japan.

Mondale: He has had contact with many Japanese companies through his law firm and has had a long-standing interest in U.S.-Japan business exchanges. He will probably be a strong ambassador. He has been involved with hi-tech and other advanced fields and will be able to make contributions on issues such as global warming. He is a graduate of Stanford University, and interestingly enough, Prime Minister Taro Aso and Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Yukio Hatoyama both studied at Stanford, as well.

-- His lack of diplomatic experience is a concern at this crucial point in relations with North Korea.

Mondale: The ambassador needs to be able to convey the issues to the president when frictions arise between the two countries. He is most appropriate for this role. You have Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell and Assistant Secretary of Defense Wallace Gregson. The North Korea issue can be handled by the team. There is also a strong staff at the embassy. He will do fine.

-- How does the Obama administration perceive Japan?

Mondale: The U.S.-Japan relationship is very important. This is reflected in the fact that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made a visit, and (Aso) was the first leader invited by President Obama to Washington.

Japan's importance has not diminished (just because of the growing influence of China and India); its importance is rather increasing.

A strong bilateral relationship will help deal with China and India. Japan and the U.S. are democratic countries, and such is the basis of the cooperation.

(Itaru Oishi, Washington)

-- How would you describe Mr Roos' personality?

Okimoto: He is an honest, thoughtful, and optimistic man. While he is not the sophisticated type you often find on the international stage, you come to like him the more you know him.

-- His nomination is said to be a reward.

Okimoto: The intelligence and organizing ability he displayed during the election campaign was highly regarded. John is able to analyze things level-headedly and objectively. If it's just fundraisers, there are many in the Obama campaign. You don't get an important post like this just for that.

-- He appears not to have much connection with Japan.

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Okimoto: Positions other than the ambassador to Japan were also considered but John was most interested in Japan. He has a lot of respect for the Japanese through his work at his law firm and has been fascinated by Japan's culture and traditions. The Japanese people may be disappointed because he is not famous. However, in terms of intellectual level and closeness to the president, he is a top class ambassador to Japan for the postwar period. He will bring new perspectives to the Japan-U.S. relationship.

-- This is the first time he will handle diplomacy.

Okimoto: He is a man who belonged to the top 5-10 percent in the law school. He is a man with intellectual curiosity and is a fast learner. He may have some gaps in his knowledge of Japanese history and politics, but they will be filled very quickly. My class was on international disarmament. He will probably have a good grasp of the issues of North Korea, China, Okinawa, and so forth very quickly. I have been sending him various documents every day.

(Tomoko Ashitsuka, Washington)

(2) Nissan to start commercial production of electric vehicles in U.S. possibly from 2012

NIKKEI (Top Play) (Abridged slightly)
June 20, 2009

Nissan Motors will launch the commercial production of electric vehicles in the U.S. It will employ an integrated system of production from batteries, core parts, to the assembling of vehicles at its U.S. plant. It will build production lines with the capacity of producing up to 100,000 units a year by 2012, tapping a low-interest loan system for green vehicles, which the U.S. government is set to introduce soon. The company plans to make such cars also in Europe and Asia, following in Japan and the U.S. It has fallen behind Toyota Motors in the mass-production of hybrid cars. It intends to expand the production of eco-friendly cars, by building an electric vehicle mass-production system ahead of other automakers in the world.

Under the plan, the new electric-car assembly lines are to be built at its plant in Smyrna, Tennessee, where Nissan North America Inc. is based. The facility, capable of making 50,000 to 100,000 eco-friendly cars a year by 2012, is expected to first produce small passenger cars, followed by other types of vehicles. This marks the first time that a Japanese automaker to mass-produce electric vehicle abroad.

The company intends to construct a production facility for high-capacity lithium ion batteries at the Smyrna site by joining hands with the NEC Corp. group. Although the batteries will initially be supplied only to Nissan, the plant may be expanded to

have the capacity of producing enough batteries to equip up to 200,000 units a year with an eye on receiving orders from other firms as well. The overall investment is estimated at 50 billion yen, but the figure may rise to more than 100 billion yen, if demand increases.

As part of measures to support the auto industry, the U.S. government last fall established a low-interest-loan program totaling 25 billion dollars or about 2.4 trillion yen for developing

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and producing eco-friendly cars. Nissan has applied for funding under the U.S. low-interest loan scheme. According to a related source, Nissan will soon receive approval for a loan topping 100 billion yen.

Toyota Motors is making and assembling Toyota Prius hybrid cars. However, no Japanese automakers are making electric cars or hybrid cars in the U.S. Nissan has determined that that commercial production of electric cars in the U.S. would pay, because the transportation cost of batteries is high and the U.S. government's low-interest loan program can be used.

Nissan plans to launch the production of 50,000 electric cars at its Oppama plant, starting in the fall of 2010. The company will export vehicles to the U.S. to sell them on the U.S. market, until it starts mass-producing the same model in the U.S. in 2012. Its plan is to put production at its U.S. plant on the track at an early date, by using the know-how of the Japanese plant. In Europe, Nissan plans to make electric cars either in Britain or in Spain. It is also considering making batteries and electric cars in China. Nissan's annual production capacity of electric vehicles will likely reach 200,000 units throughout the world by 2012.

(3) New argument in Japan on the United States (Part B): Warped conservatism

MAINICHI (Top play and page 3) (Abridged slightly)
June 22, 2009

The decision to suspend the publication of the conservative monthly magazine Shokun was made unanimously at a Bungeishunju special board meeting on February 26. The major reason was a drop in advertising revenues. The magazine's circulation peaked at 95,000 in the early 2000s when it turned excessively anti-China, anti-South Korea and anti-North Korea. But no one positively evaluated that period in the board meeting.

The magazine was established in May 1969 when the student movement was sweeping through Japan. The aim was to present an option different from the left wing based on Japan being a U.S. ally during the Cold War era.

Masao Asao, who served as the magazine's editor in chief in the mid-1990s, indicated that conservatism takes pride in being tolerant. Every time the magazine's star critic Ikutaro Shimizu's argument swayed, its regular critic Tsuneari Fukuda chided him. The magazine also carried articles by the Asahi Shimbun's popular reporters and left-wing opinion leaders, such as Akira Asada of the "modern thought boom" of in the 1980s. Anti-U.S. writers had a certain place in the magazine.

The Berlin Wall came down in the year that marked the 20th anniversary of Shokun. The history textbook row in the 1990s in the process of finding a "new enemy" replacing the left-wing sparked strong criticism of the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal, and this led to the recent boom of conservative arguments.

The rejection of the Tokyo Tribunal could have resulted in the refusal of the United States, but assertions, including those of self-claimed pro-American writers, simply escalated. But as if to fill the gap with a head-on clash with the United States, criticism was directed at the question of visits to Yasukuni Shrine by the

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prime minister and East Asian countries in connection with the issue of abductions by North Korea.

The use of pejorative expressions against China and North Korea increased in the form of being influenced by the conservative magazine Seiron published by the Sankei Shimbun. That shift was well received by readers but the magazine became less tolerant. Historians, such as Ikuhiko Hata, were often criticized in connection with the argument by former Air Self-Defense Force Chief of Staff Toshio Tamogami, who claimed in his essay that Roosevelt tricked Japan to go to war with the United States.

Nonfiction writer Masayasu Hosaka takes this view: "The left wing's characteristic of prioritizing its interpretations of historical facts has emerged in the inner circle of the conservatives, who have lost their enemy."

Shokun's readership diminished due in part to the establishment in November 2004 of the third conservative magazine WiLL. Some writers, who disliked Shokun's radical policy course, reportedly refused to contribute their essays to the magazine in the last two years.

Many readers favored radical arguments over a wide range of arguments, and the magazine's circulation fell below 40,000 in the end.

Some think Bunshun's decision to discontinue the stigmatized Shokun was sensible, but the venue to express sensible views has now disappeared.

The suspension of the Shokun was preceded by a long road of limited arguments that caused stress for the conservative print media, which was unable to frontally discuss the United States, its true theme. Even in criticizing the historical view on the Tokyo Tribunal, the magazine could not go beyond the framework of the Japan-U.S. alliance. The magazine occasionally vented its stress as "anti-U.S. historical views."

Okazaki Institute Director Hisahiko Okazaki, a self-styled pro-American opinion leader, supervised the compilation of the new history textbook that passed the government's examination in 2005. He said: "The original text included the conspiracy theory that the United States had planned to wage a war against Japan since the Russo-Japanese War. We removed that part altogether." In 2006, Yasukuni Shrine's war museum, Yushukan, eliminated the part describing the U.S. government's strong reaction from its explanation. "We have corrected anti-U.S. thinking," Okazaki said proudly. But anti-U.S. thinking can be said to have been capped only temporarily.

The argument calling for correcting historical views that was directed at East Asia might cause a schism between the Japan-U.S. alliance if something goes wrong. The Foreign Ministry's decision to offer an apology to the former U.S. soldiers comes in part from the conservative media's inflection since the late 1990s.

(4) JCP Shii moving quickly toward U.S. President Obama

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Slightly abridged)
June 22, 2009

The Japanese Communist Party (JCP) is rapidly approaching the U.S.

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even though the party has called that country "imperialist." Impressed by President Obama's speech in Prague calling for a world free of nuclear weapons, Chairman Shii sent a letter praising the speech. Afterward, the party unexpectedly received a reply from the U.S. government. What has happened to the JCP, which had given the image of its relations with the U.S. being in a hair-trigger situation?

"Love letter" beyond hostile relations

Shii said at party headquarters: "Many people have seen our party as

anti-American. But such an evaluation is not correct. We highly evaluate the nation, seeing its deeds." Somewhat bewildered at public attention at the party (over its approach to the U.S.,) Shii emphasized: "What is good is good," bearing the Obama speech in mind.

Speaking before about 20,000 citizens in Prague on April 5, President Obama declared:

"The U.S. aims at bringing about a world free of nuclear weapons. ... As the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the U.S. has a moral responsibility to act."

"Mr. Obama must be serious." Shii began to fall "in love" with Obama. He thought that he wanted to directly convey his feelings, but he said: "That is impossible. The best way is writing a letter."

In the letter, the JCP chairman wrote: "I send this letter as the representative of a political party that has been calling, along with the people who were the sole victims of atomic bombing, for eliminating nuclear weapons from the earth." He then highly praised President Obama's speech, in which he called for eliminating nuclear weapons as the goal of the U.S., the world's largest nuclear power, and also referred to its moral responsibility. He noted: "I was deeply moved by your speech," adding: "It takes on historical significance for all mankind and the people of the sole victim of nuclear bombing."

Even so, Shii made a request to a "lover," with whom he has never met. Quoting a paragraph indicating it would be impossible to build a world free of nuclear weapons while the President is alive, Shii flatly said: "I cannot agree to this view." He complained it should be impossible for you to predict how long it will take to complete the challenge you will address for the first time.

Shii further noted: "There is a significant difference in the positions of the (U.S.) government and our party. My advice or warning (in the letter) stems from my desire to see the spirit in your speech reflected in global politics." He concluded the letter with this remark: "I sincerely hope that friendly relations will be deepened between Japan and the U.S."

Shii visited the U.S. Embassy on April 28 and handed the letter over to Deputy Chief of Mission James Zumwalt. It was the first time for a JCP chief to visit the U.S. Embassy since the party was established 87 years ago.

Shii had not anticipated a reply from the President. It was satisfactory for him to only express his "one-sided love." On May 16, however, he received an unexpected reply by air mail from the

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U.S. Government. Shii said, "I was surprised" at the first letter to the JCP from the U.S. government.

Both yearning for nuclear abolition

The letter sent from the U.S. government started with the words, "Dear Mr. Shii." Although the letter was signed by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Davis, it noted: "The President told me to write a reply on behalf of him."

The letter included these words of appreciation: "You relayed your views on how to realize a nuclear-free world in the best way," and "I am glad that you have great passion." The letter further noted: "We hope to work together with the Japanese government."

On the morning of May 20, the day after he announced he had received a reply from the U.S. government, Shii asked the Prime Minister's Official Residence to arrange a meeting with Prime Minister Taro Aso.

The prime minister's daily schedule is tightly packed. But the meeting was arranged for the evening of that day, surprising Shii and reminding him of the weight of the reply.

In their meeting in the Diet Building, Shii suggested to Aso that Japan should take the initiative in international talks on nuclear abolition. In response, Aso said: "It was a great speech." When asked, "How it was great," Aso replied: "Mr. Shii, it was great because a nuclear power suggested a plan to abandon its nuclear weapons." From his words, Shii could not feel his willingness to take the initiative. He thought: "Prime Minister Aso has no idea regarding nuclear abolition as he is blind to Washington's increasing eagerness about the issue." The meeting ended only in 15 minutes.

Besides declaring the plan to eliminate nuclear weapons, President Obama has also made efforts to positively change U.S. relations with Islamic countries and Cuba. Relations with these countries completely cooled down in the days of the previous Bush administration.

After the U.S. government and the JCP exchanged letters, North Korea conducted a nuclear test. The U.S. and South Korean leaders in their meeting on June 15 agreed that the U.S. will protect South Korea under its "nuclear umbrella." These events have given an impression that the brakes have been applied to the Prague speech, but Shii gave words of encouragement, noting: "We should not see the situation simplistically."

Shii said:

"There will be twists and turns until all nuclear weapons are scrapped. North Korea's nuclear test is a setback. In order to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, however, the nuclear powers should promote the trend of nuclear abolition, and that will be the most powerful means. I hope the President will address the challenge of establishing a nuclear-free world, instead of just setting forth it as his slogan."

At the same time, Shii also complained:

"Japan-U.S. relations have hardly changed. The Japanese government

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is hopeful of continuing dependent relations with the U.S. by hosting U.S. military bases and other means, so the U.S. thinks it is all right as it is."

Despite the atmosphere of a thaw observed between the U.S. government and the JCP, the JCP's party platform lists words of hostile toward the U.S., such as, "American imperialism is the largest threat for the peace and security of the world and the sovereignty and independence of each nation's people."

Asked about the contradiction between his approach to the U.S. and the party platform, Shii replied: "Of course, there is no problem," adding: "We have seen the U.S. from various angles since we rewrote our platform in 2004."

Shii proudly said that with the exchange of the "love letters," "we were able to set up an official route of dialogue with the U.S.," adding: "I would like to visit the U.S. at an appropriate time." He said: "Conservatives have also begun to feel safe with our party." Does this analysis represent his confidence about the ability to hold the reins of government? Shii replied: "Things will not be going so easily."

Shii commented:

"If we participate in a government, we will be required to demonstrate the ability to negotiate with the U.S., financial circles, and leading companies. It will be necessary to strengthen our policies and organization. We cannot overestimate this letter. Even so, it is the first but important first step for the JCP to grow into the political party in power."

With an eye on the upcoming general election, attention is being focused on whether the Democratic Party of Japan would grab political power, and the JCP fears that it might fall into oblivion.

Will the U.S. President result in rescuing the JCP?

A person connected with the JCP grumbled: "Now that an increasing number of people in Japan have been affected by right-wing ideology, the exchange of letters between Shii and Obama might disappoint earnest supporters of the JCP."

(5) LDP forgoes approval of basic policy guidelines for fiscal 2009 budget due to turmoil over constraint on social security spending

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Abridge slightly)
June 20, 2009

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) at a meeting of the General Council on June 19 put the approval of the basic policy guidelines on economic and fiscal management for fiscal 2009 on the backburner. This is because many participants objected to the government policy of continuing to constrain an increase in social security spending. General Council Chairman Takashi Sasagawa and Policy Research Council Chairman Kosuke Hori will look into a plan to review the guidelines and confer on the issue, holding a special General Council meeting on the 22nd. When Hori announced a government plan to follow the basic policy guidelines for fiscal 2006, which stipulates an increase in social security spending by 22 billion yen a year, Hidehisa Otsuji, head of the LDP caucus in the Upper House, shouted in anger, "You are trying to send a wrong message, at a time when the Lower House election is close at hand."

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Kosuke Ito rebutted Otsuji, saying, "If we scrap the constraint policy, it would give an impression that the fiscal reconstruction policy is backsliding." However, the LDP Tax System Research Commission Sub-Committee Chairman Hakuo Yanagisawa fell in step with Otsuji, saying, "The meaning of the basic policy guidelines for fiscal 2006 has been weakened." Tax System Research Commission Chairman Yuji Tsushima stressed, "We should categorically mention that we will not constrain social security expenses."

Otsuji continued to roll out his argument opposing the government policy of constraining special security spending. General Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda asked Sasagawa to consider a revision plan, saying, "I want you to come up with good wording by using resourcefulness." The meeting shelved approving the basic policy guidelines at the discretion of Sasagawa after an hour-and-a-half discussion.

(6) Unexplained "equal Japan-U.S. relationship" - Part five of series "Risky 'fraternal' foreign policy"

SANKEI (Page 3) (Full)
June 20, 2009

"Whom should I talk to? Please give me some names. I would definitely want to listen to them."

On May 16, Yukio Hatoyama, who had just appointed the new leadership lineup of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) after being elected its president, met with Vice President Seiji Maehara and made the above request. Hatoyama has known Maehara for 15 years, since the days of New Party Sakigake and Japan New Party, which were the roots of the DPJ. When Maehara was DPJ president, Hatoyama had served as his secretary general.

Maehara mentioned a number of names. He later said: "I think the president has made his own decision on what to do." He was hopeful that Hatoyama was preparing for the administration's transition with his advisers behind the scenes.

Journalist Hajime Takano is one of the people Hatoyama had sought advice from. He is the eldest son of the late Minoru Takano, who founded the Sohyo (Japan General Conference of Labor Unions) after World War II and served as the secretary general of this group that opposed military bases and Japan's rearmament.

Hajime Takano is the author of the "Basic Ideology of the Democratic Party," which was the political platform of the old Democratic Party

founded by Yukio Hatoyama, Naoto Kan and others 13 years ago.

This document called for the spirit of "fraternity" as the "foundation of society."

However, Takano had distanced himself after the new DPJ was formed through a merger with the former Shinshinto and the expansion of the party was given higher priority than ideology.

Hatoyama has sought advice from Takano, who calls himself a "former adviser," since late last year on policy on the anti-piracy operations in waters off Somalia, and Takano told him: "The Japan Coast Guard should play the central role in such operations." The DPJ's proposed revisions to the anti-piracy bill compiled in April toed this line.

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Takano thinks that flexibility is necessary in policies after a "change of administration." He says importance should be attached to the refueling mission of the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) based on the new special antiterrorism law expiring in January 2010.

"It is difficult to withdraw immediately from the Indian Ocean." "If (the MSDF) is to be withdrawn, the question is what sort of alternatives you can propose." "Giving importance to the Japan-U.S. alliance but not being submissive to the U.S." This is the position that a DPJ administration should absolutely maintain. It is Takano's belief that an "equal relationship" is the lifeline of a "Hatoyama administration."

Skepticism about the theory of equilateral triangle

Tama University President Jitsuro Terashima, whom Takano cites as an "important adviser to Hatoyama," also serves in government positions such as the chair of the experts' committee of the "Space Development Strategy Headquarters." He has had several study sessions with Hatoyama over dinner.

Terashima has criticized the deployment of the SDF in Iraq and once contributed an article to the magazine Sekai three years ago asserting: "Relying only on U.S. deterrence in dealing with China and Asia is a serious deviation from the trends of the times."

In February 1998, he discussed in the House of Councillors Research Committee on International Affairs his pet theory on the Japan-U.S.-China triangle. His proposition that Japan should maintain a certain distance from both China and the U.S. had some things in common with the so-called theory of a Japan-U.S.-China equilateral triangle.

With regard to this equilateral triangle theory, former Liberal Democratic Party Secretary General Koichi Kato once said something to the effect that "unless these three countries have friendly relations, there can be no stability in Asia." Ichiro Ozawa also asserted three years ago, when he was DPJ president, that "the Japan-U.S.-China relationship should be an equilateral triangle."

However, a foreign affairs commentator well-versed in Japan-U.S. relations asked: "Is it possible to put the U.S., which is obliged by law to shed blood for the sake of Japan, and China on an equal footing?" The commentator expressed strong skepticism about the equilateral triangle theory.

Nebulous community

The problem is although Hatoyama will maintain the Japan-U.S. alliance, he keeps the substance of what he calls an "equal relationship" nebulous, while groping for ways to strengthen relations with China and other countries and to come up with a multilateral security framework. This thinking is shared by Hatoyama's advisers.

A source connected to Japan-U.S. relations asks: "While they talk about an equal relationship, will they pay for half of the cost of

building aircraft carriers and their maintenance?" "We have never heard how they intend to make the relationship equal."

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At a meeting with President Lee Myung Bak on June 5 during his visit to the ROK, Hatoyama noted that, "Japan looks only at the U.S. in foreign affairs" and proposed an East Asia Community. Although he added that, "We will include the U.S. if necessary," the president did not answer him directly.

After the meeting, Hatoyama told reporters at a news conference: "It is probably better to call it Asia-Pacific Community," which showed that he had not developed an overall picture of the concept.

In the constitutional revision proposals he once drafted, Hatoyama talked about "transfer of sovereignty," which was a proposal to entrust the command of the SDF to an international organization. Thirteen years ago, he wrote in the monthly magazine Bungeishunju that "with regard to the spirit of fraternity,I would like to find the answer through 'self-reliance and coexistence as citizens of the earth'."

It seems that he remains as incomprehensible and nebulous as ever today. How can Japan's security be protected under an equal Japan-U.S. relationship? Without a concrete explanation, the people cannot have peace of mind.

(7) Noticeable wavering on Northern Territories issue - Part six of series "Risky 'Fraternal' Foreign Policy"

SANKEI (Page 3) (Abridged)
June 21, 2009

The stylish Western-style mansion of the late Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama, commonly called the "Otowa Goten," stands in a corner of Otowa in the Bunkyo Ward of Tokyo. A bronze statue looking at the sky is erected in the courtyard. This is a bronze statue of Ichiro Hatoyama given as a present by Russia.

At a symposium commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Japan-Soviet joint communique in Moscow in October 2006, Mayor Alexander Losyukov of Moscow told Yukio Hatoyama, grandson of Ichiro who attended the symposium, about the presentation of Ichiro's bronze statue for his "contribution to the development of Japan-Russia relations."

At that time, Yukio, who was secretary general of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), smiled and expressed his gratitude: "I would like to carry out my grandfather's wishes and contribute to the development of Japan-Russia relations. We will treasure this statue at my grandfather's residence."

Pinning hopes on the Hatoyama clan

"The Hatoyama clan is the symbol of the development of Japan-Russia relations."

Ichiro was one of the founders of the Japan-Soviet Association and he remained the chairman until the end. Yukio is the president of the Japan-Russia Association, an organization for Japan-Russia cultural exchanges that succeeded the Japan-Soviet Association. Yukio's eldest son is also teaching at the state-run Moscow University, while learning Russian there.

Behind Russia's warm looks from Ichiro to his clan is the idea of returning only two islands (among the four Northern Islands).

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For Premier Vladimir Putin and the Russian leaders, the Japan-Soviet joint communique which provides for the return of Habomai and Shikotan after the conclusion of a peace treaty is the "only agreement" recognized as a solution to the territorial dispute

between Japan and Russia.

It appears that if only to resolve the Northern Territories issue by returning two, not four islands, Russia wants to compliment Ichiro, who was instrumental for the joint communiqu , and his family.

There are concerns about Yukio's response to the Northern Territories issue.

Return of land acceptable to the other party

The unveiling of Ichiro's statue took place in February 2007 in the presence of (then) Russian Premier Mikhail Fradkov, who was then visiting Japan. Yukio reportedly told him: "We, the grandsons should work seriously once again to resolve the Northern Territories issue. This issue cannot be resolved in a thousand years if we insist on the simultaneous return of the four islands."

Yukio himself talked about this unveiling ceremony in his e-magazine. Shortly before that, (then) Foreign Minister Taro Aso had proposed the return of half of the land area of the four islands at the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee. Yukio touched on this, and gave these comments: "Foreign Minister Aso has made flexible remarks on this. The problem with the territorial issue is as soon as anyone says anything flexible, he is immediately treated as a traitor." He argued that, "To realize the return, this has to be acceptable to the other party."

At the above-mentioned symposium in Moscow four months ago, Yukio had told reporters that: "The four northern islands are an inherent part of Japanese territory. It is important to resolve this issue first before signing a peace treaty."

It would appear that he changed his position on the return of the four islands some time after the symposium, but he changed again.

Former Vice Foreign Minister Shotaro Yachi came under fire for talking about the return of "3.5 islands" in an interview with Mainichi Shimbun. Yukio stated in his e-magazine in April that, "I have consistently asserted that giving up sovereignty on the four islands will not resolve the problem" and "If Japan shows signs of compromise from the beginning, it will find itself in an increasingly disadvantageous position in the negotiations."

When Yukio ran in the DPJ presidential election in May, he expressed the intention to "resolve the Northern Territories issue if possible."

Journalist Yoshiko Sakurai warned in the July issue of Seiron that, "Any wavering in conviction or view of the state will be taken advantage of by political enemies or foreign countries."

It seems that this Yukio is regarded by Russia as "easy to manipulate." (informed source) His "fraternal" foreign policy is being put to test on whether it can overcome its riskiness and realize national interest.

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(8) 18 DPJ junior, mid-ranking members expected to support "a Hatoyama government"

FORESIGHT (Page 92, 93) (Slightly abridged)
July, 2009

The chance of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) taking over political power is increasing. According to public opinion polls by various press companies, the DPJ is highly likely to become the leading party in the next House of Representatives election. It might be even possible for the party to win a sole majority.

Appearing on TV or newspapers as DPJ representatives are only President Yukio Hatoyama, 62, and members who once served as party president, such as deputy secretaries general Ichiro Ozawa, 67, and Naoto Kan, 62, and Secretary General Katsuya Okada. Accordingly, the party, which is now expected to seize power, has failed to give a

fresh image. However, it is said that the party has more promising junior or mid-ranking officials than the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). This article introduces 18 promising party members and forecast who are expected to assume key posts in a Hatoyama administration.

(Members at the ready)

Four members - Seiji Maehara, 47, Yoshihiko Noda, 52, Yukio Edano, 45, and Koichiro Genba, 45 - can be cited as major members who are expected to assume ministerial posts or key posts in the party or the Diet under a Hatoyama administration. The four were elected in the Lower House election in 1993 for the first time. They all supported the Morihiro Hosokawa administration when they were still first-time-elected Diet members at that time.

Although Maehara served as president, he is still only 47 years old. He is well versed in diplomatic and security policies and is also known as a train nut. Observers anticipate he would assume the post of foreign minister or defense minister, but some party members voice concern about a possible overdrive by the extreme hard-liner.

Maehara heads a group calling itself "Ryoun-kai." The group is composed of about 25 members, many of whom are junior members critical of former President Ozawa.

Noda chairs a group of lawmakers called "Kaseikai" composed of some 20 members. He is one of the first students who graduated from the Matsushita Institute of Government and Management, so he is like an elder brother for the DPJ lawmakers who graduated from that institute. He is an expert on fiscal, education and other policies. Serving as Diet Affairs Committee chairman twice, he has established personnel networks in other political parties.

Because he expressed his willingness to run in the party presidential election in August of last year but decided to pull out of the race, his reputation was downgraded. Close aides to him, such as former Policy Research Council chairman Takeaki Matsumoto and Lower House member Sumio Mabushi has also distanced himself from him. He is now making efforts to regain support of his party as a future candidate for the premiership.

Genba has played the role of offering support from behind, serving as Election Strategy Committee chairman and other key posts in the party, so he is relatively unknown, compared with Maehara and Noda.

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In the May party presidential election, however, he supported Okada and energetically moved to win over a majority of votes. Despite his soft looks, he has unexpectedly proved to be a tough negotiator. His support for the Okada camp in the presidential race is to show his anti-Ozawa stance. The focus of attention is on how this stance will affect his future political activities.

Edano used to be a lawyer. Some party members see him as a lone-wolf politician and as having little personal magnetism. But blessed with his good debate capability, he puts on a sharp performance in questioning in Budget Committee meetings and in Diet debates. He often appears on TV discussion programs. He is viewed as a typical opposition party member good at attacking, rather than defending.

The four members all backed Okada in the latest presidential election. How will Hatoyama treat these hopes in the defeated group in the presidential election in establishing a whole-party structure? His skills will be tested.

Shinji Tarutoko, 49, can be cited as another promising member in the same generation as Maehara and Noda. Tarutoko was defeated in the Lower House election in 2005, but there are still devotees of him among junior party members. In the presidential race, he supported Hatoyama. If he comes up to the capital with a Diet member's badge after a lapse of four years, a key post is expected to go to Tarutoko.

(Promising members)

Policy Research Council Deputy Chairman Akira Nagatsuma, 49, is at the front in the second group, following the listed five lawmakers. His name was widely known as he grilled bureaucrats over the pension record-keeping fiasco. He says he is trying to pose questions in simple language. He ranks high on the list of politicians picked for the premiership in opinion polls, although he has been elected to the Lower House only three times. Some observers anticipate he might be appointed as state minister for pension issues or minister of health, labor and welfare. But it is to be noted how Nagatsuma, who has criticized the bureaucracy from the outside of the government, would be able to reform the bureaucracy from the inside of the government.

Takeaki Matsumoto, 50, is a son of Jushiro Matsumoto, who once served as Defense Agency director general. He comes of a distinguished family linked to Hirobumi Ito, a famous Japanese politician in the Meiji Period. Because he used to be a banker, he is well versed in financial and fiscal policy.

Sumio Mabuchi, 48, raised his profile since he sharply attacked the government over the false quake-resistance data scandal. He is also expert on such issues as highway construction and civil service reform. Before taking the floor as a questioner, he reportedly confines himself in the Diet members' office building for scores of hours to examine related materials.

Goshi Hosono, 37, was widely known across the nation after a weekly magazine reported on his having had an affair with a female announcer. Before the report was made, he had been cutting a prominent figure among junior DPJ members. A party member once said that he in his 30s could become the youngest prime minister. Hosono has exposed waste-spending cases one after another in the Diet, based on his own investigation. In the past several elections, he

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ran in a constituency in Shizuoka, a district unrelated to him, and fortunately won a victory. His stance is close to that of Maehara, who was his senior at the Law Faculty of Kyoto University.

House of Councillors member Koji Matsui, 49, came from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry. He was regarded as one of the most superior officials among those who joined the ministry in 1983. He served as Cabinet Secretariat deputy counsellor. Working at the Prime Minister's Official Residence is a very valuable experience for an opposition party member. Some point out his inclination toward bureaucrats to some extent, but he is knowledgeable about all round policy.

Policy Research Council Deputy Chairman Tetsuro Fukuyama, 47, is an Upper House member elected in Kyoto, the same as Matsui. He has also increased his voice in the party.

Lower House member Seiji Osaka, 50, is a first-term member but is also a hot stock. When he was serving as Niseko mayor in Hokkaido, he formulated a basic ordinance on town development and won fame as a go-ahead head. Since Hatoyama has put forth such policies as decentralization and local autonomy, he is expected to play an active role.

Upper House member Renho, 41, used to be a newscaster idolized by the young and then entered the political world. Given that she is a mother of two children, she may assume a key post for declining birthrate and gender equality, like Yuko Obuchi of the Liberal Democratic Party.

(Aides)

Sakihito Ozawa, 55, Yorihiisa Matsuno, 48, and Hirofumi Hirano, 60, are cited as representative aides to Hatoyama. Ozawa used to work for a bank and a policy group. He is expected to be in charge of work to reflect Hatoyama's "fraternity" principle in concrete policies.

Matsuno has been long responsible for negotiations between the ruling and opposition parties in meeting of the Steering Committee and the Budget Committee. Some say that he has recently taken after

his father, Raizo Matsuno, who was known as a person skilled in secret maneuvers in the political community.

Hirano served as deputy secretary general and Diet Affairs Committee deputy chairman for many years. At present, he plays the role of secretary to Hatoyama as executive office head. When party lawmakers involved in scandals, he is asked to conduct an investigation or take steps in many cases. Given this, he is often regarded as the party's crisis-management supervisor.

It is favorable for Hatoyama to have the three aides with different strong areas - policymaking, Diet administration, and party management. But some members point out that their relationships are not necessarily in good shape. If the three aides try to struggle for the top post, a Hatoyama administration would be shaken.

Katsumasa Suzuki, 65, and Kenko Matsuki, 50, are cited lastly. Suzuki plays the role of coordinating views in Isshinkai, a group of Ozawa that includes many junior members. Matsuki has traveled around in the nation as Ozawa's messenger. Even if a Hatoyama administration is launched, Ozawa is expected to devote himself to

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election strategy without joining his cabinet. It therefore is conceivable that either of Suzuki or Matsuki could enter the Prime Minister's Office, assuming such posts as deputy chief cabinet secretary, and play a liaison role.

(9) Consul General-designate to Okinawa says "no need to revise" SOFA

OKINAWA TIMES (Page 2) (Full)
June 21, 2009

Raymond Greene, consul general-designate to Okinawa who will be taking up his post in August, gave an interview to Okinawa Times on June 17, expressing his views on base issues in Okinawa.

(Interviewer: Shogo Nishie)

-- What about relocation of Futenma Air Station to a site further offshore.

Greene: The existing plan is proceeding smoothly between Japan and the U.S. The location of the runways was proposed by Japan originally. During the negotiation process, we researched the environment, operations, noise, and all other issues and came up with the final plan. We want to implement the plan as soon as possible.

-- What if there is a demand to move the facility further offshore based on "rational reasons"?

Greene: We are not considering any revisions at all. The Japanese side has also made clear a similar position. The preparatory document for environmental assessment also says the government's plan is the best option.

-- The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is asserting that if it takes over the administration, it will seek to relocate Futenma out of Okinawa or Japan.

Greene: We have no plans to review the U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) realignment package, and we are not prepared to discuss this at all. What is important in the challenging security environment in East Asia today is to implement the realignment package as soon as possible.

-- What is the outlook of USFJ realignment?

Greene: An important question is where to move the functions of the bases south of Kadena Air Base. We will proceed carefully, but this will definitely be realized. The return of base land south of Kadena will be an opportunity for Okinawa's future.

-- How about the possibility of deploying Ospreys in the Futenma

replacement facility?

Greene: The U.S. government has no concrete plans on this yet. We inform the Japanese government in advance when we deploy new capabilities, but the process for the Ospreys has not begun.

--- What happens if the cost of relocating the Marines to Guam turns out to be higher than originally estimated?

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Greene: The two-plus-two agreement of 2006 clearly spells out Japan's share in the cost. This will not exceed the upper limit. The U.S. side will shoulder the additional cost if the original estimate is exceeded.

--- How about the announcement of a master plan for the return of bases south of Kadena?

Greene: We will discuss carefully with Japan and make an announcement as soon as possible. (The size of land to be returned on Camp Zukeran) is still being coordinated.

--- On the revision of the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA).

Greene: Improvement of operations is more effective, and this is the consensus between the two countries. We do not see any need for revising the SOFA.

--- Nuclear-powered submarines are visiting the White Beach more frequently.

Greene: This is also due to North Korea's provocative actions and the rise of China, Russia, and India. Maintaining the strategic balance is an important goal for Japan and the U.S. White Beach will be of increasing importance.

(10) New argument in Japan on the United States (Part A): Japan offers apology 68 years after Bataan Death March that claimed lives of 800 American POWs; First step to discussions on historical views triggered by wartime sex slavery resolution

MAINICHI (Top play and page 3) (Abridged slightly)
June 22, 2009

On May 30, U.S. Ambassador to Japan Ichiro Fujisaki, attending the convention of an organization of former prisoners of war (POW), offered the Japanese government's apology for the first time for the Bataan Death March. The Bataan Death March is an incident that occurred in 1942 during WWII in which the Imperial Japanese Army forced over 10,000 people, including American POWs, walk for more than 100 km on the Philippines' Bataan Peninsula, and some 800 people died as a result.

Since the history textbook issue of late 1990s, discussions have been going on in Japan over the meaning of the last major war and the question of wartime responsibility. But the issue of historical views between Japan and the United States has effectively been sealed off. What does the apology 68 years after the incident signify?

The convention of the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor (ADBC), which sought Japan's apology, took place in San Antonio, Texas. The organization disbanded itself that day, citing the advanced ages of its members.

At the convention, Fujisaki said: "The government of Japan would like to extend a heartfelt apology for having caused tremendous damage and suffering to many people, including prisoners of war, those who have undergone tragic experiences on the Bataan Peninsula, Corregidor Island (where the U.S. military command was located) and other places." Fujisaki's words elicited a standing ovation from

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about half of the 400 attendees.

At the convention hall, Fujisaki also said: "The basic view expressed (by me) today was within the framework of the statement issued in 1995 by then Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama. But I think Japan responded clearly to the interest of former POWs. I was glad that I was able to attend the ADBC's last convention."

ADBC National Commander Lester Tenney met with Fujisaki for the first time last November. Since receiving letters of apology last December and this February, Tenney had repeatedly called for Fujisaki's attendance at the convention to make a direct apology to the ADBC members. Listening to Fujisaki's candid statement, Tenney nodded his head in approval, thinking, "The chapter has now come to an end."

The question of historical views between Japan and United States had long been a taboo. The taboo was shattered in July 2007 when the U.S. House of Representatives adopted a resolution seeking Japan's apology for having forced foreign women to serve as sexual slaves for the Imperial Japanese Army during WWII. The Japanese government tried to block it and conservative opinion leaders and lawmakers fiercely objected to it. The event exposed gaps in view between the two countries.

It sent especially strong shockwaves through the Foreign Ministry. "Japan's postwar pacifism is not sufficiently understood by the American public. If there are calls in the United States for Japan's apology, the government should respond to them as much as possible," a senior Foreign Ministry official noted.

Chuo University law professor Yozo Yokota took this view: "The handling of POWs could be a violation of international law. But if the United States tries to pursue Japan, arguments would emerge from Japan that the dropping of atomic bombs and air raids were also illicit. I believe there has been a tacit understanding between Japan and the United States to avoid subjects that could harm the bilateral security alliance."

The question of wartime responsibility has been put on the backburner throughout the postwar period for the sake of strengthening the Japan-U.S. alliance. But the question still haunts the two countries which will celebrate (next year) the 50th anniversary of the conclusion of the revised U.S.-Japan Security Treaty.

In the postwar period, the argument has gained ground in Japan that the country was forced to accept the masochistic historical view under the American Occupation. At the same time, Japan tends to direct its criticism to China, South Korea, and North Korea instead of frontally discussing the United States on which Japan heavily relies for its national security. With an increase in the use of sensational language in conservative magazines, the monthly magazine Shokun suspended its publication in May. Reportedly the reason was partly because even though its basic line was conservative the magazine's stance of carrying a wide range of arguments, including counterarguments, showed that it could no longer resist the trend.

(11) Poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

YOMIURI (Page 8) (Full)
June 16, 2009

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Questions & Answers
(Figures shown in percentage)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 22.9

No 67.8

Other answers (O/A) 2.0

No answer (N/A) 7.3

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the foregoing question)
Pick only one from among the following reasons for your approval of
the Aso cabinet.

Something can be expected of its policy measures 20.8
The prime minister has leadership ability 6.9
There's something stable about the prime minister 9.1
His cabinet's lineup is good 5.8
Because it's a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New
Komeito 44.9
O/A 2.5
N/A 9.9

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the foregoing question) Pick
only one from among the following reasons for your disapproval of
the Aso cabinet.

Nothing can be expected of its policy measures 27.7
The prime minister lacks leadership ability 38.1
There's nothing stable about the prime minister 16.6
His cabinet's lineup is not good 3.6
Because it's a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New
Komeito 12.0
O/A 0.3
N/A 1.7

Q: Which political party do you support now? Pick only one.

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 25.0
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 29.0
New Komeito (NK) 3.5
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 2.7
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.1
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.2
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) ---
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) ---
Other political parties ---
None 36.4
N/A 1.9

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Hatoyama, who
do you think is more appropriate to be prime minister?

Prime Minister Aso 26.1
DPJ President Hatoyama 46.0
N/A 27.9

Q: Do you think the DPJ will be able to take the reins of government
in the next election for the House of Representatives?

Yes 44.8

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No 44.4
N/A 10.3

Q: If an election were to be held now for the House of
Representatives, which political party would you like to vote for in
your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 24.5
DPJ 41.5
NK 3.9
JCP 3.2
SDP 1.3
PNP 0.4
RC ---
NPN ---
Other political parties 0.2
Undecided 19.3
N/A 5.8

Q: What form of government would you like to see after the next
election for the House of Representatives?

LDP-led coalition government 12.3

DPJ-led coalition government 27.1
LDP-DPJ grand coalition government 22.6
Government under new framework after political realignment 31.3
O/A 0.0
N/A 6.6

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted June 13-14 across the nation on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. Households with one or more eligible voters totaled 1,760. Valid answers were obtained from 1,122 persons (63.8 PERCENT).

(Note) In some cases, the total percentage does not add up to 100 PERCENT due to rounding.

(12) Poll: Aso cabinet, political parties

ASAHI (Page 4) (Abridged)
June 16, 2009

Questions & Answers

(Figures shown in percentage, rounded off. Bracketed figures denote proportions to all respondents. Figures in parentheses denote the results of the last survey conducted May 16-17.)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 19 (27)
No 65 (56)

Q: Which political party do you support now?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 22 (25)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 29 (26)
New Komeito (NK) 3 (4)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 2 (3)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1 (1)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0 (0)
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) 0 (0)

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New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0 (0)
Other political parties 0 (0)
None 37 (33)
No answer (N/A) + don't know (D/K) 6 (8)

Q: If you were to vote now in a general election for the House of Representatives, which political party would you vote for in your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 23 (25)
DPJ 43 (38)
NK 3 (5)
JCP 3 (3)
SDP 1 (2)
PNP 0 (0)
RC 0 (0)
NPN 0 (0)
Other political parties 1 (1)
N/A+D/K 26 (26)

Q: Would you like the current LDP-led coalition government to continue, or would you otherwise like it to be replaced with a DPJ-led coalition government?

LDP-led coalition 23 (28)
DPJ-led coalition 52 (45)

Q: Who do you think is more appropriate for prime minister, Prime Minister Aso or DPJ President Hatoyama?

Mr. Aso 24 (29)
Mr. Hatoyama 42 (40)

Q: When comparing Mr. Aso and Mr. Hatoyama, who do you think has

more leadership as a politician?

Mr. Aso 23

Mr. Hatoyama 46

Q: Who do you think is closer to the popular sentiment?

Mr. Aso 16

Mr. Hatoyama 56

Q: Do you appreciate the Aso cabinet's economic policy measures?

Yes 26

No 62

Q: The government announced plans to cut 15 PERCENT in Japan's greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. The business community had insisted on more moderate plans and the environment minister had called for even stricter plans. But the government took a happy medium. What do you think about the government-set goal?

Appropriate 49

Too strict 16

Too moderate 20

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted June 13-14 over the telephone on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis.

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Respondents were chosen from among the nation's voting population on a three-stage random-sampling basis. Households with one or more eligible voters totaled 3,545. Valid answers were obtained from 2,086 persons (59 PERCENT).

(13) Poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Abridged)

June 16, 2009

Questions & Answers

(T = total; P = previous; M = male; F = female)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

T P M F

Yes 19 (24) 19 19

No 60 (58) 64 56

Not interested 20 (18) 16 24

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the above question) Why?

T P M F

Because the prime minister is from the Liberal Democratic Party 42

(35) 35 49

Because something can be expected of the prime minister's leadership

11 (8) 8 14

Because there's something familiar about the prime minister 22 (21)

24 20

Because something can be expected of the prime minister's policy

measures 19 (29) 28 12

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the above question) Why?

T P M F

Because the prime minister is from the Liberal Democratic Party 8

(9) 9 7

Because nothing can be expected of the prime minister's leadership

39 (26) 41 36

Because there's something imprudent about the prime minister 17 (19)

15 18

Because nothing can be expected of the prime minister's policy

measures 35 (45) 35 36

Q: Which political party do you support?

T P M F

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 20 (23) 18 22
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 34 (30) 41 27
New Komeito (NK) 4 (3) 3 4
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 4 (3) 5 4
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1 (1) 1 1
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0 (0) 1 --
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) -- (--) -- --
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) -- (0) -- --
Other political parties 1 (2) 2 1
None 32 (37) 28 35

Q: Do you have expectations for DPJ President Hatoyama?

T P M F
Yes 46 (49) 53 39

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No 47 (49) 43 51

Q: Who do you think is more appropriate for prime minister, Prime Minister Aso or DPJ President Hatoyama?

T P M F
Prime Minister Aso 15 (21) 15 15
DPJ President Hatoyama 32 (34) 40 25
Neither 46 (42) 41 51

Q: Which party, the LDP or the DPJ, would you like to see win in the next election for the House of Representatives?

T P M F
LDP 27 (29) 25 30
DPJ 53 (56) 61 47
Other political parties 12 (11) 9 14

(Note) Figures shown in percentage, rounded off. "0" indicates that the figure was below 0.5 PERCENT. "--" denotes that no respondents answered. "No answer" omitted. Figures in parentheses denote the results of the last survey conducted May 16-17.

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted June 13-14 over the telephone across the nation on a computer-aided random digit sampling (RDS) basis. A total of 1,653 households with one or more eligible voters were sampled. Answers were obtained from 1,096 persons (66 PERCENT).

(14) Poll on Aso cabinet, political parties, DPJ's leadership change

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Abridged)
June 16, 2009

Questions & Answers

(Figures shown in percentage. Parentheses denote the results of the last survey conducted May 16-17.)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 17.5 (26.2)
No 70.6 (60.2)
Don't know (D/K) + no answer (N/A) 11.9 (13.6)

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the previous question)
What's the primary reason for your approval of the Aso cabinet? Pick only one from among those listed below.

The prime minister is trustworthy 20.4 (7.1)
Because it's a coalition cabinet of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito 9.5 (10.9)
The prime minister has leadership ability 3.6 (1.9)
Something can be expected of its economic policies 11.3 (16.3)
Something can be expected of its foreign policies 6.4 (3.1)
Something can be expected of its political reforms 0.4 (2.5)
Something can be expected of its tax reforms 0.5 (1.8)
Something can be expected of its administrative reforms 0.9 (4.1)

There's no other appropriate person (for prime minister) 44.3
(50.3)
Other answers (O/A) 0.6 (---)

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D/K+N/A 2.1 (2.0)

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the first question) What's the primary reason for your disapproval of the Aso cabinet? Pick only one from among those listed below.

The prime minister is untrustworthy 13.9 (14.7)
Because it's a coalition cabinet of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito 7.8 (6.7)
The prime minister lacks leadership ability 23.0 (13.5)
Nothing can be expected of its economic policies 18.8 (29.8)
Nothing can be expected of its foreign policies 0.7 (2.0)
Nothing can be expected of its political reforms 10.8 (10.8)
Nothing can be expected of its tax reforms 5.6 (2.8)
Nothing can be expected of its administrative reforms 5.9 (8.7)
Don't like the prime minister's personal character 12.0 (9.1)
O/A 0.4 (0.2)
D/K+N/A 1.1 (1.7)

Q: Prime Minister Aso has announced plans to cut 15 PERCENT in Japan's greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels to cope with global warming. The government estimates each household's burden increase at 76,000 yen per year in order for Japan to attain this goal. What do you think about this goal?

Too high 57.6
Appropriate 26.5
Too low 4.9
D/K+N/A 11.0

Q: Would you like the present LDP-led coalition government to continue, or would you like it to be replaced with a DPJ-led coalition government, or would you otherwise like a new framework of political parties to form a coalition government?

LDP-led coalition government 14.9 (18.7)
DPJ-led coalition government 35.9 (31.2)
LDP-DPJ grand coalition 14.7 (18.9)
New framework under political realignment 28.0 (24.3)
D/K+N/A 6.5 (6.9)

Q: Which political party are you going to vote for in the next House of Representatives election in your proportional representation bloc?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 18.7 (25.8)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 47.8 (37.3)
New Komeito (NK) 2.7 (4.0)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 3.2 (4.1)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.8 (1.0)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 1.6 (1.5)
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) --- (0.1)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0.2 (0.1)
Other political parties, groups 0.2 (---)
D/K+N/A 23.8 (26.1)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Hatoyama, which one do you think is more appropriate for prime minister?

Taro Aso 21.5 (32.0)
Yukio Hatoyama 50.4 (43.6)
D/K+N/A 28.1 (24.4)

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Q: Which political party do you support?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 19.8 (25.2)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 38.5 (30.0)

New Komeito (NK) 2.1 (4.2)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 2.0 (3.4)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.8 (0.7)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.5 (1.2)
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) 0.1 (---)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0.1 (---)
Other political parties, groups 0.3 (---)
None 33.4 (33.8)
D/K+N/A 1.4 (1.5)

Polling methodology: This survey was conducted across the nation on June 13-14 by Kyodo News Service on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. Among randomly generated telephone numbers, those actually for household use with one or more eligible voters totaled 1,473. Answers were obtained from 1,039 persons.

(15) My opinion: Japan needs to speed up legislation banning possession of child pornography

MAINICHI (Page 9) (Full)
June 18, 2009

By Yoshihisa Togo, vice chairman of Japan Committee for UNICEF

I think there are many people who are concerned about the antisocial nature of "child pornography," of which a huge volume spreads (to other countries) from Japan. Videos of child pornography are posted on websites as products of child abuse for adults as DVDs and hard discs, as well as file sharing programs for people who share the same interests. The abused victims suffer not only from temporary pain but also from the disgrace and anxiety that the videos might be seen by people close to them.

Japan Committee for UNICEF has received the support of many people in urging the government since 1997 to establish a law to punish child pornography, prostitution, and human trafficking. Approved by the ruling and opposition parties, the existing Law for Punishing Acts Related to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography was enacted in 1999.

Due to the technical advancement of the Internet in modern society, the reality, however, is that a huge amount of this antisocial information is spreading not only to Japan but also abroad.

The reason why I use the word "spread" is because even if Japan tries to eliminate child pornography from other countries, if just one user decides to use file sharing software to distribute child pornography, the video will immediately be disseminated around the world. There was one case last year in which a list of child pornography was sent overseas and the list was downloaded about 250,000 times and spread all over the world.

Therefore, Japan's huge volume of child pornography that is spread abroad will have a negative impact not only on countries that are delayed in coming up with preventive measures but also on countries that have laws banning child pornography. Japan should learn from the consensus of the world's leading industrialized countries that

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in order to prevent child pornography from spreading through file sharing software, there is no other way but to prohibit possession of child pornography.

In addition to a general declaration, the Group of Eight (G-8) justice and internal affairs ministerial in late May adopted a declaration on child pornography. The declaration stipulates that contrary to consensus, there are some countries that are slow to take legislative action because they do not sufficiently understand damage caused by child pornography. Although the declaration does not mention the names of the countries, it points out countries in which legal systems are insufficient.

Incidentally, Japan and Russia are the only G-8 members that do not ban the possession of child pornography. I attended a sub-committee meeting of the World Congress 3rd against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents held in Rio de Janeiro late last November.

A summary statement the meeting adopted gives a special warning to the sexual exploitation of children using new Internet technologies. The statement recommends that each country should not delay preventing the legal implementation of other countries, and all countries should improve legal systems based on international standards. The statement also recommends that the intentional production, distribution, acquisition, and possession of virtual images (including comics and personal computer games) should be punished.

Japan is now required to put into statutory form the ban on the possession of child pornography. We, the Japan Committee for UNICEF, and 23 prominent figures presented to the Diet an "emergency petition on child pornography" with 115,000 signatures calling for banning the possession of child pornography in particular. Based on the fact that a large number of signatures were collected in such a short period, it is clear where the will of the people lies.

Although some are concerned about the stipulation based on the perspective of freedom of expression, Japan should realize that as a signatory of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that there is no room for it to allow child pornography. I strongly hope that the law will be passed.

ZUMWALT